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GOP PUTS CORPORATE INTEREST ABOVE THAT OF THE FAMILIES OF TRAGEDY VICTIMS

**Republicans Reduce Liability of ALL Corporate Interests From Sept. 11
& Provide Airline Executives Taxpayer Funded Bonuses**

The Republican Leadership truly outdid itself last night – adding appalling provisions to an already deficient aviation security bill in order to entice Republicans to switch their votes. **The most egregious provisions will exempt all corporate interests from liability from the September 11 tragedy and remove limits placed on salaries and benefits of airline chief executives.**

Now, the families of the victims of the Sept. 11 tragedy will have little recourse to seek accountability. Under the Republican aviation security bill, ANY defendant in a September 11-related action would be completely immunized from punitive damages regardless of its conduct. That means that Republican bill will protect even a private airport baggage screening company that may ultimately be found to have recklessly allowed a breakdown in the security protocols.

The Republicans also partially removed the limits placed on the salaries and benefits of highly paid airline chief executives passed in the Air Transportation System Stabilization Act passed in early October. Thanks to the GOP bill, the airline executives could be raking in big bonuses at the expense of the American taxpayer – even while their companies are enjoying a taxpayer funded financial bailout provided to deal with the economic fallout from September 11. And just this morning, apparently embarrassed by the largesse of this provision, the GOP Leadership is scrambling to undo this egregious provision by using a highly unusual floor procedure.

And these are just 2 of the worst provisions in the Republicans bill. The GOP bill also:

- As a favor to the credit card companies, requires air carriers to honor passenger tickets of other carriers whose flights were disrupted by terrorism, insolvency or bankruptcy;
- Makes war risk insurance, extended to the airlines as part of the bailout, available to the companies that provide general services for private airplanes;
- Allows airline carriers to share in the bills' \$1.5 billion authorization;
- Provides that a portion of the \$5 billion from the Airline Stabilization Act that goes for airline assistance must go to air ambulance services;
- To benefit chicken hatcheries, allows air carriers that transport mail under contract with the Postal Service to transport animals that may already be shipped by the postal Service.

Six weeks have passed since the Sept. 11 terror attacks, but House Republicans have still held up the aviation security bill until today. The Democrats have been insisting that the Republicans bring up the same bill that the Senate voted 100 to nothing in support of 3 weeks ago!

Sadly, instead of putting expedience in the name of public safety first – the GOP fashioned a dangerous political strategy designed to benefit the special interests and win at any cost.

outrage of the week